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Subjects Booklet

Achieving Excellence

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Welcome to Ferndown Sixth Form

Choosing your Sixth Form subjects is one of the most important and exciting steps in your education. It's the moment where you begin to shape your future — whether that's progressing to university, starting an apprenticeship, or moving into the world of work.

At Ferndown Sixth Form, we are proud to offer a broad and challenging curriculum that allows every student to pursue their interests, develop their strengths, and achieve their ambitions. Our Sixth Form provides an inspiring environment where independence, curiosity, and ambition are encouraged and supported by dedicated teachers and staff.

This booklet is designed to help you make informed choices about the courses that best suit your goals and aspirations. Inside, you'll find details about each subject — what you'll study, how you'll be assessed, and where the subject might take you in the future.

We are committed to ensuring as much flexibility as possible for our students when it comes to choosing their subjects. All students that submit their sixth form application before Christmas will be able to choose any combination of subjects that they wish. Our subject option blocks will then be produced from these choices, giving every student the best possible chance to be able to study the exact subjects of their choosing.

As you explore your options, think carefully about what motivates you, what you enjoy, and what your future plans might require. Our teachers, careers advisors, and Sixth Form team are here to offer guidance and answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form community and supporting you on the next stage of your journey.

Best wishes

C.Juddery

Charlotte Juddery
Head of Sixth Form

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Please scan this QR to take you straight to our prospectus.

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ENTRY REQUIREMENTS for September 2027

Minimum requirement for Ferndown Sixth Form is five subjects at grade 5 and above inclusive of English and Maths. Students achieving 5 grade 4s including English and maths may be admitted via an admissions meeting.

Subject	Entry Requirements
A level Art	5+ in an Art based subject
A level Biology	6+ in Biology with a 5 in Maths
A level Business Studies	5+ in GCSE Business (if taken), 5+ in Maths
A level Chemistry	6+ in Maths and 6 in Chemistry
A level Computer Science	Standard Entry
A level Economics	6+ in maths and 5+ in business (if taken)
A level English Language	Standard entry
A level English Literature	Standard entry
A level Ethics & Philosophy	Standard entry
A level French	6+ in French
A level Further Maths	8+ in Maths
A level Geography	5+ in Geography (if taken)
A level History	5+ in History (if taken) or 5+ in English

A level Law	5+ in English Language
A level Maths	7+ in Maths
A level Media Studies	5+ (or equivalent) in media (if taken)
A level Photography	5+ in Art or Photography
A level Physics	6+ in GCSE Maths and Physics
A level Politics	Standard entry
A level Product Design	5+ in Maths
Public Services (NCFE Level 3 Cert.)	Standard entry
A level Psychology	5+ in English, Maths and one science subject
A level Sociology	Standard entry
A level Spanish	6+ in Spanish
A level Textiles and Fashion	5+ in Art or Textiles
A level Theatre Studies	Standard entry
Core Maths (Level 3 Mathematical Studies, equivalent to an AS qualification)	5+ in Maths GCSE higher tier paper
Criminology Level 3 Applied Diploma	Standard entry

Health & Social Care (Cambridge Technical Level 3 Certificate/Diploma)	4+ in Biology
Single/Double/Triple Sport (Cambridge Technical Level 3 Certificate/Diploma)	5+ in GCSE PE or L2M in Health and Fitness (if either subject has been taken at GCSE)
V Level in Education OCR	Standard entry
Human Biology (Cambridge National Level 3)	5+ in Biology
T - Level Software Development	Minimum of 2 grade 5 GCSEs including Maths and 3 grade 4 GCSEs including English.

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Biology

Qualification	AQA A Level in Biology 7402
Why study this?	Biology A-level will give you the skills to make connections and associations with all living things around you. A-level Biology is highly rated by universities because it provides a strong foundation for a vast range of science, healthcare, and STEM degree courses and careers, such as medicine, veterinary science, and biomedical engineering. The challenging curriculum develops essential scientific and practical skills including analysis, problem-solving, and critical thinking, making graduates more competitive for both academic and professional opportunities in fields related to the life sciences.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown modelling and exam skills are at the forefront of teaching with the required practical activities giving students the opportunity to embed their skills and knowledge. The A-level practicals ensure that students can access the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) requirements which prepare students for Biology based university courses including medicine, dentistry, nursing and biomedical sciences.
Progression opportunities	According to bestcourse4me.com, the top seven-degree courses taken by students who have an A-level in Biology are: Biology, Psychology, Sport and exercise science, Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy Chemistry and Dentistry. Careers related to biology in 2025 span healthcare, environmental science, and biotechnology, with high demand for roles like medical professionals, biotechnologists, and ecologists due to advancements in gene editing, sustainable energy, and public health research. Other popular paths include research scientists, microbiologists, forensic scientists, and genetic counsellors, with many roles requiring further specialised study beyond an undergraduate degree.
Transferable skills	Studying A level Biology allows students to develop skills in the writing and understanding of scientific methods, data analysis, observation, correlations and causal relationships. The ability to evaluate data, use and understand statistical tests when drawing conclusions. Biology, like all sciences, is a practical subject. The wide range of practical's you undertake will give you the skills and confidence needed to investigate the way living things behave and work. It will also ensure that you are prepared for university level Biology.
Assessment	Three two-hour exams sat at the end of Year 13.
Subject email and name	Nicki Bailey NicolaBailey@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Business Studies

Qualification	AQA A level Business Studies
Why study this?	Studying A Level Business helps you understand how the real world works. You'll learn how organisations make decisions, manage people, market products, and respond to economic changes — all skills that are valuable in almost any career. Business combines practical knowledge with analytical thinking, encouraging you to evaluate problems, make decisions, and communicate ideas effectively. Whether you want to start your own company, work in management, marketing, or finance, or simply understand how businesses shape society, A Level Business gives you the confidence and foundation to succeed in the modern world.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown we have an established Business Studies team with real world business experience to support teaching of business in real world terms. We will also be delivering the newly developed AQA specification for September 2026 which gives the most up to date learning for Business Studies including aspects such as digital technology, Customer Relations Management and AI.
Progression opportunities	Further education or training in a wide range of business subjects from administration and human resources to marketing or finance. Alternatively, the broad understanding of business developed is a great starting point for any employment.
Transferable skills	A-Level Business develops excellent transferable skills highly valued by employers and applicable across many university courses and industries. These include problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making, alongside analytical, communication, and teamwork abilities. Other key skills include data analysis, time management, organisation, adaptability, and financial literacy.
Assessment	Three exams at the end of year 13, equally weighted. • 3.1 Unit: What is business? Managing marketing and finance • 3.2 Unit: Managing people and operations • 3.3 Unit: Business and society, business and the external environment, and business strategy.
Subject email and name	Miss A Costello- Head of Business and Economics ACostello@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Chemistry

Qualification	AQA A level Chemistry 7405
Why study this?	Chemistry is the science of the material world; the composition, structure and interactions of all matter in the universe and the energy associated with chemical changes. Studying chemistry will provide you an understanding of - Changes in the environment and possible solutions to these issues - Sugars, proteins and DNA - Fuels and batteries to provide and store energy - Fertilizers, food preservatives and flavourings to help us produce and store food
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown you will find experienced, well qualified staff who are enthusiastic about their subject and want to impart that enthusiasm to you. We have a track record of getting students excellent grades and many of our students go on to study chemistry or related subjects such as biochemistry, biomedical sciences and medicine/dentistry at university. Annual trips to chemistry lectures in London will broaden your knowledge beyond the A level specification.
Progression opportunities	Chemistry is essential for many university courses such as medicine, pharmacy, veterinary and dentistry. It leads to many career paths such as forensic science, engineering, environmental science, pharmacology, patent law, scientific sales or technical writing – these could be through further courses at university or through an apprenticeship or degree apprenticeship route.
Transferable skills	Chemistry will give you skills in data analysis and processing, higher order thinking skills, problem solving, planning, analysis and evaluation skills. You will also gain the practical skills you need to complete A level required practicals that will prepare you for working in industrial and university laboratories.
Assessment	3 x 2 hour exam papers in June of Year 13 (300 marks in total) You will also be assessed during the course on your practical skills and if successful will achieve a Certificate in Practical Competency separately to your A level grade.
Subject email and name	Head of Chemistry – Helen Neal Helenneal@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Computer Science

Qualification	A Level Computer Science
Why study this?	80% of UK Businesses are actively seeking employees with digital expertise. Wide range of careers that are currently shortage skills in the UK. Ideal if you enjoy maths, logic and problem solving as we'll show you how to apply these skills to real world problems.
Why Ferndown?	Studying Computer Science at Ferndown Upper School offers an exceptional foundation for aspiring technologists. The department boasts deep expertise, enabling tailored support for a wide range of NEA projects—from game development to data analysis. Students are actively encouraged to pursue independent programming exploration, fostering creativity and confidence beyond the classroom. With a thriving robotics extracurricular program, learners gain hands-on experience in automation and engineering. Ferndown's commitment to excellence is reflected in outstanding student outcomes, with many graduates progressing to competitive computing courses at top universities. Not previous coding experience necessary as our experienced teachers will help and support your skill development.
Progression opportunities	University – Computer Science, Software Development, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, Robotics Advanced Apprenticeships.
Transferable skills	Problem Solving – How to break down complex problems and build solutions Logical Reasoning skills. Documentation and presenting technical solutions Data Analysis
Assessment	Paper 1: On Screen Programming Assessment. 40% Paper 2: Written Exam on theory. 40% NEA Project: 20%
Subject email and name	Head of Computer Science Kirsty Holloway kirstyholloway@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Criminology

Qualification	WJEC Criminology
Why study this?	Theft, burglary, assault. We live in a world where the perception is of increasing crime and with that, our chances of become victims. However, is this really the case? Is crime on the rise? How are crimes investigated? What are the types of crime? Criminology is a subject that encourages you to be critical, analytical and evaluative, and is perfect for anyone inquisitive about crime, human nature or current affairs.
Why Ferndown?	Criminology is a popular subject at Ferndown. Lessons are engaging and interesting, and pupils leave the classroom feeling that they have been stretched and made progress. Pupils enjoy the relevance of the subject, and the fact that the study of it is rooted in science and contemporary issues.
Progression opportunities	Pupils may go on to study the subject further at University and move into careers in forensics, the Police, or probation. Other degrees options include Law, Psychology or Forensics. Some pupils prefer a vocational route and continue their study with apprenticeships in the probation service and other industries.
Transferable skills	Pupils are critical thinkers, open-minded and can engage in, and with, high-quality research. Pupils need to be independent and hard working to maximise their chances for success.
Assessment	There are two Controlled Assessments and two Exams. Unit 1 (Year 12) and Unit 3 (Year 13) – Controlled Assessment Unit 2 (Year 12) and Unit 4 (Year 13)
Subject email and name	Mr Bridges williambridges@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Economics

Qualification	AQA A level Economics
Why study this?	Understand the real world – You'll learn how markets, governments, and businesses work, and how decisions affect people's lives. Relevant current affairs – From inflation and unemployment to globalisation and climate change, economics helps explain the headlines. Decision-making – You'll see how choices are made with limited resources, giving insight into both personal finance and wider policy. Universally respected subject – Economics is valued by universities and employers because it combines numeracy, literacy, and critical thinking.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown we have an established Business Studies & Economics team with real world business experience to support teaching in real world terms.
Progression opportunities	Higher Education: Study degrees in Economics, Business & Management, Finance, Banking & Accounting, Politics, International relations or social sciences. Embark on apprenticeships in similar fields. Careers: Economics provides a string foundation for careers in finance and banking, Government, civil, marketing, data analysis, Law, Journalism and Education, to name but a few.
Transferable skills	Analytical skills, numeracy, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, decision making, research skills to name but a few.
Assessment	Paper 1 – Markets and Market Failures Paper 2 – National and International Economy Paper 3- Economic Principles and issues Each paper is equally weighted taken at the end of year 13.
Subject email and name	Miss A Costello – Head of Business and Economics acostello@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Education

Qualification	OCR V Level in Education
Why study this?	Education is an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives. This course allows you to explore how individuals develop, what influences the way they learn and how education can help everyone reach their full potential. You will investigate areas such as child development, wellbeing, inclusion and additional learning needs. You will also gain an understanding of the important role teachers and other professionals play in supporting learners. This course is ideal for students who are interested in people, enjoy exploring new ideas and want to make a positive contribution to society.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown Upper School, you will benefit from a supportive learning environment where you can develop your knowledge, confidence and understanding of education. You will learn through a variety of teaching approaches, including discussions, debates, group activities, case studies and real-life examples. These experiences will help you connect classroom learning to the world of education and develop an understanding of the opportunities and challenges within the sector. The course will encourage you to become an independent, reflective learner while preparing you for your next steps into higher education or employment.
Progression opportunities	This qualification can open doors to a variety of further education and career pathways. You could progress to university courses such as: Education Studies, Primary Teaching, Childhood Studies, Psychology, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Teaching assistant, Learning mentor, educational psychologist, Early years practitioner, Youth worker etc
Transferable skills	Throughout the course, you will develop valuable skills that can be used in education and a wide range of other careers. These include: Communication: Expressing ideas clearly and interacting confidently with others. • Teamwork: Working collaboratively and contributing to group activities. • Problem solving: Finding solutions to challenges and exploring different approaches. • Research: Gathering, analysing and evaluating information. • Critical thinking: Questioning ideas and developing informed opinions. • Leadership: Taking responsibility, supporting others and showing initiative. • Reflection: Recognising your strengths and identifying areas for improvement.
Assessment	The course is assessed through a combination of coursework and examinations across two years. 60% non-exam assessment (coursework, projects and investigations) and 40% External examinations
Subject email and name	Head of Health and Social Care – Leanne Gillett Leannegillett@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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English Language

Qualification	AQA A-Level English Language 7702
Why study this?	Unlock the power of words with A Level English Language! Sharpen your communication, boost your critical thinking, and dive into how language evolves in society and shapes the world around you.
Why Ferndown?	Here at Ferndown, we have current discussions around language in society around us. We cover a broad range of social topics such as Language and Gender, Accents and Dialects and discussions around the influence of technology on language. We keep you up to date with the latest developments in the subject with our annual attendance to a language conference in London. In a university-style lecture hall students will hear from subject experts who ask questions such as; do platforms like TikTok really led to new ways of speaking and interacting? The coursework elements of this course connect to your interests. You will complete a Language Investigation and a piece of Original Writing. Many of our students use these for university applications.
Progression opportunities	This course offers a pathway into a wide range of exciting careers. It's ideal for students interested in journalism, media, marketing, law, publishing, or education.
Transferable skills	Develops skills in analysis, communication, critical thinking, and research, along with an understanding of audience, purpose, and how social context can influence meaning.
Assessment	2 x 2-hour 30-minute Exams worth 80% of overall grade Non-Exam Assessment Coursework Component worth 20%
Subject email and name	Head of Key Stage 5 English – Rebecca Anstey rebeccaanstey@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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English Literature

Qualification	OCR A-Level English Literature H472
Why study this?	Dive into powerful texts, explore big ideas, and understand the world from new perspectives. Through reading, discussion, and analysis, English literature connects you with different perspectives and voices from past and present.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown we make it a priority for students to experience a variety of dramatic performances of their set texts. From trips to visit the Globe Theatre in London to watching performances at Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon, we allow students to really get to know the characters they are studying and fully immerse themselves in the texts. The coursework elements of this course connect to your interests. You write your own question, pick a theme and select a novel of your choice to compare with a set text. You also have an opportunity to be creative and write in the style of a particular writer or poet.
Progression opportunities	English literature provides endless opportunities. It prepares you for careers in journalism, marketing, publishing and more - any field that values strong thinking, writing, and communication skills.
Transferable skills	Builds valuable skills like critical thinking, clear communication, creativity, and empathy. It also develops research and writing abilities that are essential for success in university and a wide range of careers.
Assessment	2 x 2-hour 30-minutes Exams worth 80% of overall grade Non-Exam Assessment Coursework Component worth 20%
Subject email and name	Head of Key Stage 5 English – Rebecca Anstey rebeccaanstey@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Ethics and Philosophy

Qualification	OCR A level Religious Studies H573
Why study this?	The aim of philosophy is to search for the truth by asking the right questions and by formulating logical arguments. As there are no simple answers, it is an intellectually challenging subject. Ethics is the study of how humans make moral decisions and the reasons we give for our decisions. It examines whether morality is relative and so changes according to time, place, or culture or whether it is absolute and certain actions are intrinsically good or bad. This subject develops the skills of reasoning and logical thought, analysis and evaluation and literacy.
Why Ferndown?	Ferndown students have a history of success in Ethics with students achieving top grades with many students finding a passion for Philosophy, leading to them continuing to study the subject at university. Students are taught by subject specialist who have a real passion for the subject. We have developed excellent links with the community and have an annual Theology conference at a local church where we also work with Moorlands bible college students to help students to develop their evaluation of key topics such as Gender and Euthanasia. Students love the discussion-based lessons that we offer in Ethics which really helps students to develop the evaluation skills necessary.
Progression opportunities	Philosophy is an accepted A level for most degrees. Studying Theology, Religious Studies or Philosophy at degree level can lead to careers in teaching, police, and armed forces and many more. Many of our students pursue caring professions in medicine. Others have gone on to study Law, Journalism as well as more creative areas such as Textiles and Art.
Transferable skills	Builds excellent skills such as analysis and evaluation, reasoning and logical thought, handling abstract ideas, empathy, essay writing, extended terminology, knowledge of current affairs
Assessment	3 X 2 hour exams
Subject email and name	Erin Goldbey ErinGoldbey@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Fine Art

Qualification	AQA A Level Art & Design; Fine Art.
Why study this?	Students respond to a variety of artists and techniques, creating highly personalised outcomes rooted in personal interests and artistic voice. The course supports the development of creative thinking, self-expression, and critical engagement with visual culture. Exploring symbolism in historical and contemporary art.
Why Ferndown?	A-Level Fine Art empowers students by nurturing individuality, creative risk-taking, and technical skill. Our specialist teachers hold first-class degrees in Fine Art Painting & Art History. 2025 Year 13 results: 85% achieved A*-B, 100% achieved A*-C
Progression opportunities	Ferndown BTEC Level 4, Foundation Diploma in Art, Design and Media practice course. The course has opened doors for students being accepted into sought-after Universities, including Russell Group across the UK, such as; Goldsmiths, UAL; Chelsea, London College of Fashion and Oxford Ruskin. Please see Foundation course information within.
Transferable skills	Students develop research and analytical skills through artist analysis and written work. They strengthen critical thinking and written communication through the essay component and sketchbook practice. The course supports independence, problem-solving, and creative decision-making.
Assessment	Component 1: 60% Personal Investigation (Portfolio) Component 2: 40% Externally set task 15-hour practical exam There are 4 assessment objectives. Each objective is marked out of 24 for each project, and feedback reflects the marking criteria. Both practical and written components are internally assessed and standardised then moderated by visiting examiners from AQA.
Subject email and name	Martha Chengadu -; Head of subject Fine Art marthachengadu@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Level 4 Foundation Diploma Art, Design and Media

Qualification	BTEC Level 4 Foundation Diploma in Art, Design and Media Practice
Why study this?	A vocational qualification that provides specialist, work-related learning across art, design and media sectors. It equips students with the specialist knowledge, practical and professional skills and understanding they need to progress onto studying creative subjects at university.
Why Ferndown?	Moderator Feedback, 2025: 75% Distinction grades 100% P/M/D "*The exhibition was thoughtfully executed and featured some truly exceptional work. The quality of work on display was outstanding, with the majority of students achieving merit or distinction grades. This safe, expressive space is not only creatively enriching but also emotionally vital. Students are actively encouraged to take creative risks and push boundaries in their practice.*" Ferndown offers a bespoke, nurturing course for up to 15 students with a dedicated studio space, equipment kit and additional resources provided free of charge. We offer regular life drawing and a subsidised residential trip to London. Tutors consist of a team of nine specialist staff alongside visiting artists and alumni. Facilities include a photographic dark room, fashion, fine art and textile print room facilities, atrium exhibition space and access to 3D printer, laser cutter and product design studios, dedicated PCs with full Adobe suite. 1:1 portfolio building consultations 100% of applicants achieved place at first choice universities.
Progression opportunities	BA (Hons) Degree destinations include: Architecture, Animation, Atelier and Tailoring, Contour Fashion, Comic and Concept, Costume, Fashion, Fine Art, Games Art, Graphic Design Illustration, History of Art, Luxury Sustainable Textiles, Painting, Photography, Styling, Textile Design, Visual Communication.
Transferable skills	Creative problem solving, research and analysis, adaptability and resilience, self-management and motivation, communication, collaboration, technical and digital literacy.
Assessment	Six units of exploratory work in a range of disciplines, including university pathways and response to London residential visit. Group critiques covering six assessment objectives. Final major project culminates in a public exhibition curated in house and assessed in situ by visiting examiner in June.
Subject email and name	lisarobson@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Lisa Robson, Foundation Course Leader & Head Faculty

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French

Qualification	AQA A level in French
Why study this?	When you learn another language, you extend your linguistic and cultural knowledge, expand your worldview and broaden your horizons. You recognise differences in values and beliefs and discover new ways of doing things, not to mention strengthen your understanding of your own cultural and linguistic background. Throughout French A level, you will have the opportunity not only to develop your knowledge of France and the French language, but of current affairs and issues across the entire Francophone world. You will also study both a film and a novel during the course.
Why Ferndown?	Here at FUS we have passionate and experienced A level teaching staff and we are constantly updating our resources to reflect current cultural awareness and language use. Students also have access to Boost Dynamic Learning which is an interactive resource platform with a wealth of material to practise all skill areas.
Progression opportunities	Language skills are highly sought after by both universities and employers. Speaking a foreign language enables you to compete in the global marketplace in a wide range of careers connected to areas such as the diplomatic service, marketing, customer service, law, business management and journalism to name a few. However, if you are passionate about languages you may wish to explore careers opportunities in an area more directly related to French such as travel consultant, aviation operations manager, interpreter/translator, bilingual administrator, cabin crew, heritage-engineering technician and commercial procurement and supply.
Transferable skills	As a French student, you will gain skills which are highly valued by employers, such as verbal and written communication, problem solving, processing of information, teamwork, literacy and oracy. You will also develop your discussion and analytical skills.
Assessment	Assessment in this subject is 100% exam (no coursework) Paper 1 – Reading, Writing and Listening (2h30) Paper 2 – Writing (2 hours) Paper 3 – Speaking (21-23 minutes)
Subject email and name	Amelia Uphill ameliauphill@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Geography

Qualification	Edexcel A Level Geography (9GE0)
Why study this?	Geography allows you to study and explore our natural world, its wonderous landscapes and features, and to develop an understanding of how it impacts on our daily lives, and how we can impact on it. Across the course you will look at coastal landscapes and how they impact on different communities, tectonic hazards and the threats that they pose, water and carbon as key resources and how they impact on our climate and environment, globalisation and superpowers, focusing on how countries relate and interact with each other, regeneration and how this can change the outlook for an entire community, and migration and identity and what this means to individuals across the world.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown you will receive teaching from experienced, subject specialist staff who are experts in both the physical and human aspects of Geography. We also place a clear focus on fieldwork and visits to various landscapes and allow you to choose the focus of your examined fieldwork investigation, giving you the freedom to make your coursework about what you are interested in most.
Progression opportunities	Geography is a highly respected subject at university as it covers aspects of both the sciences and humanities, and lends itself naturally to studies in environmental science, climatology and energy and resource management. The skills developed are also applicable to numerous career pathways as well, including law, politics, tourism and event management, business management, accountancy and journalism.
Transferable skills	Geography develops skills across many different disciplines such as critical thinking, research skills, communication and presentation and analysis of data, alongside developing empathy and an understanding of why global events occur.
Assessment	3 exams at the end of Y13 each 2hrs 15mins, one on physical geography, one on human geography and a synoptic paper drawing in aspects from both, accounting for 80% of the total grade. The coursework fieldwork investigation accounts for 20% of the final grade.
Subject email and name	Head of Geography – Mr. P. Crossley phillipcrossley@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Health and Social Care

Qualification	Cambridge OCR Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification
Why study this?	Health and Social Care is a fast-growing sector with many opportunities, but this course offers more than just career preparation. It helps you become a well-rounded, compassionate person with skills useful in everyday life and any job. You'll learn about physical, emotional, and social wellbeing, gaining confidence to support others and make a positive impact. The health industry is valued, vital, and in demand.
Why Ferndown?	Our students consistently achieve outstanding results, regularly surpassing national averages. You'll be taught by experienced and friendly staff, including an industry expert with years of frontline Health and Social Care experience who is dedicated to supporting your success. We pride ourselves on offering a positive and inclusive learning environment where your wellbeing and future are our top priorities.
Progression opportunities	This course opens the door to a wide range of progression opportunities, whether you choose to continue your studies or enter the workforce directly. Many students pursue university degrees in fields such as Nursing, Midwifery, Social Work, Psychology, Paramedics, Public Health and Education. Others choose apprenticeships in care and support roles, gaining hands-on experience while continuing their education. There are also direct routes into employment within healthcare and social care settings. With a rising demand for skilled professionals, there are endless opportunities everywhere -the possibilities are truly vast in this vital and rewarding sector
Transferable skills	You'll develop a wide range of transferable skills that are essential not only in health and social care but in virtually every career path. These include effective communication, empathy and understanding, teamwork, time management, problem-solving, and professional behaviour. Such skills are highly valued by employers across all industries,. You won't just gain knowledge—you'll build skills for life that will support your personal and professional growth wherever your career takes you.
Assessment	The course is made up of six units completed over two years. You will study two units which are externally assessed through an exam (45%) and 4 internally assessed through assignments (55%). To include unit on Anatomy and Physiology. First examination taken in January year 1, second in June of year 1. Students are permitted to resit the examination twice. This equates to three attempts in total
Subject email and name	Head of Health and Social Care – Leanne Gillett Leannegillett@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Human Biology

Qualification	**OCR Cambridge National in Human Biology**
Why study this?	Human Biology gives you the opportunity to explore the fascinating science of the human body and understand how it works. You will discover how our bodies function, how different systems work together, what keeps us healthy and how diseases affect us. You will also investigate the science behind human health, nutrition, lifestyle choices and medical developments. This course is ideal if you are interested in people, health and science. It combines scientific knowledge with practical investigation, helping you develop an understanding of how biology relates to everyday life.
Why Ferndown?	You will be taught by experienced and enthusiastic subject specialists who are passionate about science and committed to helping you achieve your best. We provide an engaging and supportive learning environment where you can develop your knowledge, confidence and practical skills. We aim to bring the subject to life and help you understand how the science you study connects to the world around you.
Progression opportunities	Studying Cambridge National in Human Biology provides an excellent foundation for further study in biology and other science-related subjects. This qualification is equivalent to one A Level. The qualification is particularly relevant if you are considering future careers in healthcare, nursing, medicine, physiotherapy, sports science, biomedical science, nutrition or other health-related professions.
Transferable skills	Throughout the course, you will develop a range of valuable transferable skills, including problem-solving, research, scientific investigation, data collection and analysis. You will learn to interpret scientific information, communicate ideas clearly and apply your knowledge to real-life situations.
Assessment	The Cambridge National in Human Biology combines externally assessed and internally assessed units. Assessment includes written examinations (40% of the final grade) and coursework-based assignments (60%), allowing you to demonstrate both your scientific knowledge and your ability to apply it to practical and real-world situations.
Subject email and name	Nicki Bailey NicolaBailey@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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History

Qualification	AQA A level (8145) Options 1L The Quest for Political Stability, Germany 1871-1991, 2M Wars and Welfare, Britain 1906-1957
Why study this?	History is the story of humanity – our triumphs and failures, our power and our passion. It explores the lives of both the great and the ordinary, revealing how the past shapes who we are today. Our courses cover key moments in modern history. *Germany 1871–1991* traces the nation's journey from unification through war and division to reunification. *Britain 1906–1957* examines the foundations of modern Britain, exploring political, social, economic and cultural change.
Why Ferndown?	History at sixth form is different to lower school. The course has more time in which to reflect on events and issues and develop one's own interpretation of history. Teachers are expert in their areas of study, scoring excellent results and producing rounded, independent learners by the end of the course, ready to tackle university or the workplace with confidence and skill. There are strong relationships between students and the teacher. We understand our students and always make time to help them develop their voice, their writing and their skills.
Progression opportunities	History rarely leads to careers explicitly linked to the subject itself. You are as likely to progress to management, marketing, human resources, finance, journalism, the civil service, security and diplomatic branches of government, politics and law as you are to go in a completely different direction.
Transferable skills	History equips you for any career dealing with communication, language and the analysis, assessment and judgement of situation, information and context. It is rich in the skill of understanding a predicament and in providing the insight towards finding a solution.
Assessment	Both Units 1 and 2, Germany and Britain, are examined through a 2 ½ hours exam paper, consisting of 1 compulsory source or extract question and 2 essays. Both papers contribute 40% of the overall grade. Unit 3 is a Non-Examined Assessment unit where students complete a 4500-word piece of extended writing on a question they have formulated themselves.
Subject email and name	Head of History – Mr C. Martin Chrismartin@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Law

Qualification	A-level Law
Why study this?	A-Level Law is valuable as it develops critical skills that include; analytical thinking, problem-solving and the art of negotiation that are all useful in many careers, including law. Studying law requires students to develop strong research and communication skills, together with providing a greater understanding of society and current affairs.
Why Ferndown?	A-level Law is being introduced at Ferndown Upper School to fulfil the requests of students. Law will be taught by a teacher who is a fully qualified Solicitor and Company Secretary with over 25 years' experience in practicing law. Pupils will learn the importance of the subject together with the logical application of law.
Progression opportunities	A-level law provides a solid foundation for legal careers such as a legal secretary, solicitor or barrister. It will also support careers in the police force, social care or courts and a wide range of careers in other fields including by way of example business, journalism, and politics.
Transferable skills	Studying A-level Law enables students to develop research techniques, logical thinking, and increases attention to detail, strengthening written and verbal communication. Students learn to interpret complex information, construct balanced arguments, and problem-solve by applying legal principles to factual scenarios.
Assessment	A-level Law may be assessed by 3 written 2-hour exams in year 13, that include topics such as: English Legal System, Nature of Law, Criminal Law, Tort Law and Contract Law. Each exam would contribute equally to the final assessment mark.
Subject email and name	Head of Law -Jo Pearson jopearson@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Maths

Qualification	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Mathematics (9MA0)
Why study this?	Mathematics is a highly respected subject that develops logical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to analyse and interpret data qualities valued by universities and employers alike. If you enjoy working with numbers, patterns, and real-world applications, A Level maths will challenge and stretch you, while giving you a solid foundation for many exciting future pathways.
Why Ferndown?	At FUS, we offer high-quality teaching from experienced maths specialists who are passionate about helping every student succeed. You'll benefit from small class sizes and personalised support, access to online resources and help, and a friendly collaborative learning environment.
Progression opportunities	A Level Mathematics opens doors to a wide range of degree courses and careers, including: Mathematics, , Engineering, Physics, Computer Science, Economics, Finance, Data Science, Business Management Many top universities regard A Level maths as one of the most valuable and versatile qualifications you can achieve.
Transferable skills	Through this course, you will develop: • Analytical and critical thinking • Logical reasoning and precision • Problem-solving and modelling skills • The ability to interpret and communicate complex ideas clearly These are highly sought-after skills across all career sectors.
Assessment	The course is assessed entirely by examination at the end of Year 13. You will complete three 2-hour papers: • Pure Mathematics 1 • Pure Mathematics 2 • Statistics and Mechanics There is no coursework element.
Subject email and name	Head of A level maths, Ruth Dunstone ruthdunstonen@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Core Maths

Qualification	AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
Why study this?	The Core Maths course develops practical, real-world math skills, as it is designed to be relevant to everyday life, careers, and other subjects. The course moves beyond theoretical concepts to teach practical skills like financial mathematics (tax, mortgages), data analysis, and problem-solving that are useful in both professional and personal life. It is ideal for those who achieved a grade 5 or higher at GCSE but do not want to commit to a full A-level, allowing them to continue developing their mathematical skills without the higher-level A-level content.
Why Ferndown?	At FUS, we offer high-quality teaching from experienced maths specialists who are passionate about helping every student succeed. You'll benefit from small class sizes and personalised support, access to online resources and help, and a friendly collaborative learning environment.
Progression opportunities	Core Maths supports the application to a wide range of degree courses and careers, including: Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, Finance, Data Science, Business Management By choosing this qualification, students maintain and develop their mathematical abilities without needing to take a full A-level in the subject, which is highly valued by both universities (some of which make alternative offers to students with Core Maths) and employers seeking numerate and analytical candidates.
Transferable skills	Through this course, you will develop: Problem Solving, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Financial Acumen, Critical Thinking, Logical Reasoning, Communication, Confidence and Resilience
Assessment	The course is assessed entirely by examination at the end of Year 12. You will complete two 1-hour 30 minute papers There is no coursework element.
Subject email and name	Head of Mathematical Studies and Statistics – Mr Haymonds AlexanderHaymonds@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Further Maths

Qualification	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Further Mathematics (9FM0)
Why study this?	Further Mathematics is for students who have a real passion for maths and enjoy exploring complex ideas beyond the standard A Level course. It allows you to deepen your understanding of mathematical concepts, develop advanced problem-solving skills, and gain a real insight into how mathematics underpins science, technology, and engineering. If you love a challenge and want to stand out academically, Further Maths is the ideal choice.
Why Ferndown?	At FUS, we offer high-quality teaching from experienced maths specialists who are passionate about helping every student succeed. You'll benefit from small class sizes and personalised support, access to online resources and help, and a friendly collaborative learning environment.
Progression opportunities	A Level Further Mathematics opens doors to a wide range of degree courses and careers, including: Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Computer Science, Economics, Finance, Data Science, Business Management Many students who take Further Maths go on to study at Russell Group and other top universities, often with advanced standing or access to more challenging degree options.
Transferable skills	Further Maths helps you develop: • Exceptional analytical and logical reasoning • Resilience and precision in problem solving • Advanced quantitative and abstract thinking • Confidence with complex data and models These skills are invaluable across STEM fields, business, and beyond.
Assessment	The course is assessed entirely by examination at the end of Year 13. You will complete four papers, each 1 hour 30 minutes long: • Core Pure Mathematics 1 • Core Pure Mathematics 2 • Two applied option papers (chosen from Statistics, Mechanics, or Decision Mathematics) There is no coursework element.
Subject email and name	Head of A level further maths, Ruth Dunstone ruthdunstonen@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Media Studies

Qualification	AQA A level Media Studies
Why study this?	In Media Studies, we explore the intentions behind media production and examine how audiences interpret and respond to content. We critically question the continued use of stereotypes and outdated representations, challenging these through theoretical frameworks. As the media landscape evolves, we also consider a compelling shift: does the media still shape the audience, or has the audience begun to shape the media?
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown, our Media Studies students consistently achieve impressive results, with many choosing to pursue further education in media-related fields. We maintain strong connections with our alumni, regularly gaining valuable insights into their professional journeys. Our diverse curriculum allows us to collaborate with a wide range of local businesses, opening up exciting career pathways in marketing, journalism, and production. As a department, we are committed to continuous growth and innovation. We're actively investing in industry standard production equipment and expanding opportunities for students to hone their skills. In 2026, students will gain access to our dedicated green room, *The Cabin*, designed for filming and specialist photoshoots—providing a professional space to refine their craft and bring creative visions to life.
Progression opportunities	Media studies allows students to progress onto courses and careers in marketing, PR, production for TV or film, advertising, journalism, photographic journalism, sports journalism and broadcasting.
Transferable skills	Students develop critical analysis, research, independence, teamwork, creative thought, design, production and essay writing skills.
Assessment	Two exams (35% each) and one Non-Exam Assessment (30%)
Subject email and name	Sara Jackson Sarajackson@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Music - Vocational

Qualification	RSL Creative Music Industry & Music Practitioners
Why study this?	This qualification is vocationally focused and tightly aligned with industry standards, meaning that what you learn is directly relevant for working in the real world of music (performance, composition, production etc.) Designed to reflect the changing demands of the music, performance and digital media sectors, it emphasizes creative application, skills development and professionalism RSL Awards is a specialist awarding body, and its Vocational Qualifications (VQs) are recognised in schools, colleges and training providers across the UK. That means employers, universities, and music industry professionals will understand and value the qualification.
Why Ferndown?	Our music students have an active role in the musical life of the school and the local community, with numerous performance opportunities in and out of school, recordings, concerts and shows. The music department is constantly evolving, with practice rooms, pianos, drumkit, amplifiers and professional recording equipment
Progression opportunities	Students can progress their studies at university level, on a number of courses in music, such as, performance, music production, music for film and video-game, music business, sound design and engineering, among others. Students complete the course also equipped to go directly into work in the music industry, in the area of their choice.
Transferable skills	This qualification gives you a toolkit of widely valued skills, such as creativity and innovation, technical and digital literacy, project planning and time management, collaboration and teamwork, critical listening and evaluation, communication and presentation, entrepreneurial and industry awareness, and self-discipline and resilience.
Assessment	A variety of practical assessments and portfolio-type assessments
Subject email and name	Mr Roberto Gallo robertogallo@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Photography

Qualification	AQA A Level Art and Design; Photography
Why study this?	A Level Photography develops creative thinking, advanced technical skills, and valuable transferable abilities applicable to many future careers. It combines artistic expression with practical, project-based work, making it a well-rounded and academic qualification. Photography works particularly well alongside Media Studies and other creative arts subjects at A level.
Why Ferndown?	We have a dedicated photography computer suite with brand-new computers running Windows 11 and Adobe Photoshop 2025. We have a large purpose-built darkroom and photographic studio. Students will also share access to the Media Studies green room 'Cabin' in 2026 for filming and specialist photoshoots.
Progression opportunities	Our students have gone on to study photography, photojournalism, marine and underwater photography, film production and animation at university. Others have become professional photographers with their own businesses in commercial and wedding photography. Many students have progressed to the Ferndown BTEC Level 4, Foundation Diploma in Art, Design and Media practice course in Year 14. The course has opened doors for students being accepted into sought-after Universities, including Russell Group across the UK, such as; Goldsmiths, UAL; Chelsea, London College of Fashion and Oxford Ruskin. Please see Foundation course information within
Transferable skills	Creative problem solving, research and analysis, adaptability and resilience, self-management and motivation, communication, collaboration, technical and digital literacy.
Assessment	Component 1: 60% Personal Investigation (Portfolio) Component 2: 40% Externally set task 15-hour practical exam There are 4 assessment objectives. Each objective is marked out of 24 for each project, and feedback reflects the marking criteria. Both practical and written components are internally assessed and standardised then moderated by visiting examiners from AQA.
Subject email and name	Fionaliddiard@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Miss Fiona Liddiard

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Physics

Qualification	AQA A Level Physics 7408
Why study this?	A Level Physics helps you understand how the world works, from the tiniest particles to the vastness of space. It challenges you to think logically, solve problems, and apply maths in real-world situations—skills that are highly valued by universities and employers alike. Physics opens the door to a wide range of exciting careers in science, engineering, technology, medicine, and finance, while also developing transferable skills like critical thinking, data analysis, and resilience. If you're curious about how things work and enjoy solving complex problems, A Level Physics is a rewarding and respected subject that can take you far.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown we have experienced, subject specialists who are enthusiastic about their subject and want to give you the best possible support and education. We offer a wide range of super curricular such as Lectures hosted by Nobel prize winners and STAG masterclasses
Progression opportunities	Studying A Level Physics opens the door to a wide range of exciting progression opportunities. It is a key subject for university degrees in physics, engineering, mathematics, computer science, and other STEM fields, as well as supporting applications for courses in architecture, economics, and medicine. Beyond university, Physics is highly valued by employers and provides a strong foundation for degree apprenticeships and careers in industries such as aerospace, energy, construction, technology, and finance.
Transferable skills	A level Physics gives you skills in problem solving, analytical thinking, research skills and mathematical skills. You will also gain skills such as collaboration, resilience and adaptability. This makes it a versatile qualification that can lead to a wide variety of career paths.
Assessment	Three 2 hour papers (totalling 250 marks). Paper 1 assesses content from Modules 1 – 6.1 (34%), Paper 2 assesses content from Modules 6.2 - 8 (34%), Paper 3 assesses practical skills and data analysis (32%). You will also be assessed during the course on your practical skills to achieve a certificate in practical competency separate to your A level grade.
Subject email and name	Ashleigh Hammett Ashleighhammet@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Politics

Qualification	Edexcel A Level Politics
Why study this?	In a world of increasing complexity and apparent risk, a qualification in Politics is a vital tool in navigating the 21st century world. At Ferndown, we understand that the need for informed, engaged, and positive participation is critical for safeguarding democracy, and are proud to offer A Level Politics as an option for our Sixth Form students. As our students begin to take their steps into the world around them, they are bestowed the valuable right to vote. Political education and understanding enables our students to make informed decisions about the society that they are a part of, enabling their voice to be heard and playing an important role within the composition of our country.
Why Ferndown?	You will be taught by experienced and passionate politics teachers in a well-resourced department. Mr Bridges has extensive experience of teaching politics, but has also worked in industry and spent time working for a Parliamentary Candidate. At Ferndown we recognise the incredible extra-curricular opportunities that come with studying the subject, and we will visit Parliament, the Supreme Court, spend time with your MP and engage in debate competitions with other local schools.
Progression opportunities	Politics students go on to change the world around them. Whether in Politics, Law, the Military, Civil Service, banking or teaching, Politics opens doors and creates opportunity.
Transferable skills	You will develop the skills to think critically, to be open-minded, communicative and evaluative. Politics encourages collaboration and thoughtfulness, but also hard work - all skills that are essential in the modern workplace.
Assessment	3 exams at the end of the second year of study. Paper 1 – UK Politics Paper 2 – UK Government Paper 3 – Comparative Politics - Global
Subject email and name	Mr Bridges Williambridges@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Product Design

Qualification	AQA A-level Design and Technology - Product Design - 7552
Why study this?	This is a **creative** and thought-provoking qualification that gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers. Especially those in the creative industries. Students will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning in to practice by producing prototypes of their choice. **They will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer**, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.
Why Ferndown?	We have **large workshops** with up-to-date tools and machinery, along with a computer room linked to **CAD, laser and 3D printers**. Excellent instruction from teaching and technician staff with, cumulatively, 50years of teaching GCSE and A Level Design and Technology!
Progression opportunities	**Higher Education routes** such as Product and Industrial Design; Architecture; Engineering (Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, etc.); Interior Design etc. Universities value D&T for its combination of analytical and creative thinking, especially when paired with subjects like Maths, Physics, or Art. **Career Opportunities** include Product Designer; CAD Technician; Design Engineer; Architectural Technician; Furniture Designer; **Apprenticeships** in design and engineering sectors would also welcome a candidate with A Level product Design.
Transferable skills	This course gives may transferable skills, such as critical thinking, **project management**, teamwork and collaboration, **technical drawing and CAD**, problem-solving and innovation.
Assessment	50% of the course is a design and make project where students bring their own context – they find a need and design a product that solves that need. 50% is two exams, with paper one covering technical aspects (materials and processes) and paper two covering history of design and design processes.
Subject email and name	Adam Dolman, Head of Design and Technology adamdolman@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Public Services

Qualification	NCFE Level 3 Certificate Uniformed Public Services
Why study this?	This exciting course which is equivalent to one A level covers a variety of topics ranging from learning about careers in the public service sector to practical based units where students can learn about sport coaching, Physical fitness, outdoor adventurous activities and developing their leadership skills. Students will have their leadership skills put to the test when they complete problem solving tasks and understand the value of teamwork when they plan team events.
Why Ferndown?	The PE department who run this course have got a fantastic track record of excellent results in this subject with most students achieving the highest grades. The students at Ferndown will participate in outdoor activities at Moors Valley where they will take part in high ropes course at Go Ape and learn map reading skills competing in orienteering. The focus of the course is to enhance students' employability, so all the units are directly relevant to real-life work situations whilst developing those key skills such as teamwork, communication and leadership. Students will develop valuable employability skills through creation of a CV, personal statement and participating in a formal practice interview.
Progression opportunities	This course offers a pathway into a wide range of exciting careers for those interested in the Police, Fire Service, Army, Navy, Coastguards, NHS, Management roles, Justice, Security, or the Sport industry.
Transferable skills	The Public Services course develops the transferable skills of leadership, communication, observation and analysis, evaluating and critical thinking
Assessment	Students will study 6 units, all of which are either coursework or practically assessed. The units include: Unit 1: Preparing for a career in uniformed services Unit 2: Develop Physical Fitness Unit 3: Develop leadership Skills Unit 4: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit 15: Sports Coaching Unit 16: Skills for land based outdoor adventurous activities
Subject email and name	Ryanellis@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Mr R Ellis, Head of PE

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Psychology

Qualification	AQA Psychology 7182
Why study this?	Psychology is the scientific study of mind and behaviour — in other words, it helps us understand why people think, feel and act the way they do. You'll explore fascinating topics such as memory, attachment, social influence, mental health and criminal behaviour. You will learn how to think critically about evidence, analyse real-world issues and develop strong research, writing and evaluation skills that are valued in a wide range of careers. If you are curious about people, enjoy asking questions, and want to understand yourself and others better, Psychology is an exciting and rewarding A Level choice.
Why Ferndown?	You will be taught by one specialist psychology teacher who has over 18 years' experience, leading very successful psychology departments. Miss Glynn has been an AQA examiner for many years so has expert insight into the examination skills needed to excel in the subject.
Progression opportunities	A qualification in Psychology is valuable to students considering a wide variety of careers, such as: *Medicine* • *Business* • *Health and Social Care professions* • *Sports Management* • *Education* • *Law* • *Industry* • *Marketing* It is also ideal preparation for a degree in Psychology.
Transferable skills	Studying A Level Psychology helps students build a wide range of transferable skills valued by universities and employers. Students develop strong analytical and critical-thinking skills by evaluating theories, interpreting data and judging the quality of evidence. They gain research skills, including planning investigations, collecting data and using statistics to draw conclusions. Psychology also strengthens written communication through structured essay writing and argument building. In addition, students improve their ability to work independently, manage information, solve problems, and apply knowledge to real-world situations.
Assessment	You will sit three equally weighted 2-hour examination papers at the end of year 13. **Paper 1 topics:** Social Influence, Memory, Attachment & Clinical psychology **Paper 2 topics:** Approaches to psychology, biopsychology, research methods **Paper 3 topics:** Issues & debates, Gender, Schizophrenia & Aggression
Subject email and name	Indiaglynn@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Miss India Glynn – Head of Psychology

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Sociology

Qualification	Eduqas A Level Sociology
Why study this?	Sociology helps you understand the world around you — how society works, why people behave the way they do, and how institutions like family, the media, and religion shape our lives. You'll explore key issues such as inequality, gender, class, ethnicity, disability and social change. If you're interested in people, current affairs, and how social forces influence everyday life, Sociology is the perfect subject for you.
Why Ferndown?	At Ferndown Upper School, our Sociology department is known for engaging lessons, excellent student support, and strong exam results. We use a range of teaching methods — from debates and group work to analysing real sociological studies — to help you think critically and apply theory to real-world examples. Our teachers are experienced subject specialists who are passionate about helping students succeed both academically and personally.
Progression opportunities	Sociology is highly valued by universities and employers alike. It provides an excellent foundation for degrees in Sociology, Criminology, Psychology, Politics, Law, Education, Social Work, and Media Studies. Many of our students go on to careers in policing, journalism, teaching, social research, health, law, and public services.
Transferable skills	Studying Sociology develops a wide range of skills that are useful in any career. You will learn to: • Think critically and question assumptions • Analyse evidence and construct balanced arguments • Conduct and interpret research • Communicate ideas clearly in written and verbal form • Understand and respect different perspectives and cultures These skills make Sociology students adaptable, thoughtful, and effective problem-solvers — qualities that are highly valued in both higher education and the workplace.
Assessment	C1 Socialisation and Culture: Topics include; Culture and Identity, Family and Households and Religion (40%) C2: Methods of Sociological Enquiry (20%) C3: Power and Stratification: Topics include; Social Inequality, and Health and Disability
Subject email and name	KatieRaisbeck@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Mrs Katie Raisbeck - Head of Sociology

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Spanish

Qualification	AQA A Level Spanish 7692
Why study this?	With around 400 million Spanish speakers throughout the world, Spanish is becoming increasingly more important with regards to business. When it comes to travelling, knowing the language and culture of the land you visit will give you insights into the things that a non-Spanish speaker would never have access to. Speaking another language opens a number of opportunities to you, both travel and work wise.
Why Ferndown?	100% pass rate. Small groups. Specialist and committed teachers. A large number of our students continue their studies at university.
Progression opportunities	Speaking a foreign language enables you to compete in the global market place in a wide range of careers such as the diplomatic service, marketing, customer service, law, business management and journalism to name a few. However, if you are passionate about languages you may wish to explore careers opportunities in an area more directly related to MFL such as travel consultant, aviation operations manager, interpreter/ translator, bilingual administrator, cabin crew, heritage-engineering technician and commercial procurement.
Transferable skills	As a Modern Foreign Languages student, you will have gained skills highly valued by employers, such as verbal and written communication, problem solving, processing of information, teamwork, literacy and oracy. A level Spanish helps students develop confident, effective communication skills in Spanish and gives them a thorough understanding of the culture of countries and communities where Spanish is spoken. It allows students to develop their ability to read, write and speak in Spanish with accurate grammar in order to understand spoken Spanish in a variety of contexts and genres.
Assessment	Unit 1 Listening, reading and translation. It lasts 2.5h and is worth 40% of the final mark. The listening will be done on a PC. Unit 2 Writing. This 2h exam is worth 30% of the final mark. You will write about a Spanish film you have seen and a Spanish book you have read. Unit 3 Speaking. 21-23 minutes, with 5 minutes preparation time. You will talk about one of the topics covered throughout the course and also discuss your individual research project which is on the topic of your choice. This could be a Spanish artist, musician, period of Spanish history, book or film. This exam is worth 30% of the final grade.
Subject email and name	FranMoyano@fernup.dorset.sch.uk Mrs Fran Moyano (Head of Spanish)

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Sport Single Award

Qualification	OCR Cambridge Technical Level 3 Extended Certificate in Sport & Physical Activity
Why study this?	This course is equivalent to one A level and has lots of variety with both practical units as well as sports science and exam units. Students will learn about the anatomy and physiology of the human body and how it changes with both exercise and training. They will also have practical assessments as well as learning how to coach and understand how to organise large sports events.
Why Ferndown?	Here at Ferndown all our A Level Sport courses boast some of the best grades nationally with most students achieving the top grades. The PE department have always had outstanding outcomes from this course and is well suited for students who have a passion for sport, health and fitness or a general interest in the human body. Students also get the opportunity to go off site to Rockley Park to participate in water sports.
Progression opportunities	This course offers a pathway into a wide range of exciting careers for those interested in Physiotherapy, Personal Training, Exercise Scientist, Sports Scientist, PE Teacher, NHS staff, Sport Psychology, Events Management, Leisure and Coaching.
Transferable skills	All of our Level 3 Sport courses will teach the transferable skills of Communication, observation and analysis, evaluating, critical thinking, leadership and teamwork.
Assessment	Students will have two external exams, which include anatomy & physiology and the organisation of sport alongside coursework units covering sports coaching, planning of sport events and assessments in practical skills. The external exams are sat in the first academic year of year 12.
Subject email and name	Mr R Ellis, Head of PE Ryanellis@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Sport - Double Award

Qualification	OCR Cambridge Technical Level 3 Diploma in Sport & Physical Activity
Why study this?	This course is equivalent to two A levels and has lots of variety with both practical units as well as sports science and exam units. Students will learn about the anatomy and physiology of the human body and how it changes with both exercise and training. They will also have practical assessments as well as learning how to coach and understand how to organise large sports events. There are units that also focus on sport psychology and sports injuries and rehabilitation.
Why Ferndown?	Here at Ferndown all our A Level Sport courses boast some of the best grades nationally with most students achieving the top grades. The PE department have always had outstanding outcomes from this course and is well suited for students who have a passion for sport, health and fitness or a general interest in the human body, Sport psychology and sports injuries and rehabilitation. Students also get the opportunity to go off site to Rockley Park to participate in water sports.
Progression opportunities	This course offers a pathway into a wide range of exciting careers for those interested in Physiotherapy, Personal Training, Exercise Scientist, Sports Scientist, PE Teacher, NHS staff, Sport Psychology, Events Management, Leisure and Coaching.
Transferable skills	All of our Level 3 Sport courses will teach the transferable skills of Communication, observation and analysis, evaluating, critical thinking, leadership and teamwork.
Assessment	Students will have three external exams, which include anatomy & physiology, the organisation of sport and working safely in sport giving a deeper knowledge into first aid, alongside coursework units covering sports coaching, sports injuries, sport psychology, fitness testing, performance analysis and planning of sport events and assessments in practical skills. The external exams are sat in the first academic year of year 12.
Subject email and name	Mr R Ellis, Head of PE Ryanellis@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Sport - Triple Award

Qualification	OCR Cambridge Technical Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport & Physical Activity
Why study this?	This exciting course is equivalent to three A levels and has lots of variety with both practical units as well as sports science and exam units. On this popular course students will learn about the anatomy and physiology of the human body and how it changes with both exercise and training. Their knowledge and understanding of sports injuries and diet to manage lifestyle will be enhanced. They will also have practical assessments as well as a built-in work experience placement with students also learning how to coach.
Why Ferndown?	Here at Ferndown all our A Level Sport courses boast some of the best grades nationally with most students achieving the top grades. The PE department have always had outstanding outcomes from this course and is well suited for students who have a passion for sport, health and fitness or a general interest in the human body, personal training, sports psychology and sports injuries and rehabilitation. Students also get the opportunity to go off site to Rockley Park to participate in water sports. Triple sport students will also complete a work experience placement in a sports organisation as part of one of their assessments. Students will also complete a first aid course.
Progression opportunities	This course offers a pathway into a wide range of exciting careers for those interested in Physiotherapy, Personal Training, Exercise Scientist, Sports Scientist, PE Teacher, NHS staff, Sport Psychology, Events Management, Leisure and Coaching.
Transferable skills	All our Level 3 Sport courses will teach the transferable skills of Communication, observation and analysis, evaluating, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork and the value of customer service.
Assessment	Students will have four external exams, which include anatomy & physiology, working safely in sport, the business of sport and the organisation of sport alongside coursework units covering sports coaching, planning of sport events and assessments in practical skills. One unit is assessed through a work experience placement.
Subject email and name	Mr R Ellis, Head of PE Ryanellis@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Software Development - T-Level

Qualification	T Level – Software Development
Why study this?	A T Level in Software Development is a dynamic two-year program designed to launch students into the tech industry with confidence and real-world experience. It combines classroom learning with a valuable 9-week industry placement, giving students hands-on exposure to professional environments. The curriculum is broad and future-focused, covering essential topics like data analysis, project management, cybersecurity, networking, hardware, web development, and databases. This blend of academic depth and practical training equips learners with the skills and insight needed to thrive in software careers or progress to higher education in computing.
Why Ferndown?	Choosing to study a T Level in Software Development at Ferndown Upper School means joining a program renowned for excellent results—even for students with no prior coding experience. With a dedicated placement manager to secure high-quality industry placements, learners gain invaluable real-world exposure. The school's vibrant robotics program fosters essential soft skills like teamwork and problem-solving, while structured activities help students build confidence in presentation and communication—key assets for thriving in the modern workplace. Ferndown's supportive environment ensures every student is equipped to succeed in both higher education and the tech industry – with graduates leaving the course to competitive apprenticeship programs (including JP Morgan), university courses and to full time work.
Progression opportunities	University – Computer Science, Software Development, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, Robotics Advanced Apprenticeships.
Transferable skills	Analytical Thinking, Communication skills, Teamwork and Collaboration, Project Management, Digital Literacy and Cyber-awareness.
Assessment	Year 12 – Core Assessment (50%). 2 Exams and a Mini Project sat in test conditions Year 13 – Placement (Pass/Fail). Occupational Specialist Project (50%)
Subject email and name	Head of Computer Science Mrs Kirsty Holloway khollowa@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

FERNDOWN | Sixth Form

Textiles

Qualification	AQA A Level Art and Design; Textiles
Why study this?	Students will access a diverse range of practical learning opportunities and hone industry linked skills across various fashion and textile disciplines including art textiles, costume, surface pattern and print, fashion design, construction and contour, installation, illustration, luxury sustainable, photography and styling. The course allows students to respond individually to their own interests and the world around them, nurturing and developing a personal voice.
Why Ferndown?	Experienced subject specialist staff, career related learning, practicing alumni contacts, university visits, links and workshops, artist and designer careers talks and lectures. Local and national museum, exhibition and gallery visits, online learning webinars. Annual external exhibition opportunities with Blandford Fashion Museum. Dorset Textile prize winning department. Specialist facilities and technicians including a dedicated print textiles space, heat press, screen printing facilities, Janome sewing machines, dummies, mannequins, library of dressmaking and tailoring patterns. 100% A-B grades 2025. Annual historical costume loan.
Progression opportunities	Ferndown BTEC Level 4, Foundation Diploma in Art, Design and Media practice course. The course has opened doors for students being accepted into sought-after Universities, including Russell Group for Luxury Sustainable Textiles. UAL; Chelsea, London College of Fashion; print textiles, fashion contour and styling. De Montfort, AUB and Falmouth for costume. UCA Epsom: Atelier and Tailoring, Textile Design and Fashion. Please see Foundation course information within this booklet.
Transferable skills	Creative problem solving, research and analysis, adaptability and resilience, self-management and motivation, communication, collaboration, technical and digital literacy. Pattern cutting, tailoring, textile design and sustainability.
Assessment	Component 1: 60% Personal Investigation (Portfolio) Component 2: 40% Externally set task 15-hour practical exam
Subject email and name	Lisa Robson: Head of Subject lisarobson@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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Theatre Studies

Qualification	A Level in Drama and Theatre - AQA
Why study this?	There is no other subject that builds your communication skills alongside academic prowess as A Level Theatre Studies. Every piece of theatre that has been created since the ancient Greeks is reflective of the social, cultural and political context of their time and therefore is a complementary subject to those who want to explore the human predicament; drawing upon their understanding of history, psychology, politics and sociology. It is an excellent choice for students who want to get out of their heads and learn through experience. The course offers a balanced focus on creating theatre, appreciating performance and theatrical theory. You will leave the course as a theatre maker; confident in realising ideas in a creative world.
Why Ferndown?	Drama students at Ferndown have the unique opportunity to have the AQA curriculum tailored to their individual interests. With highly experienced staff and an exam board that gives choice; students will explore the classic texts as well as modern day works. Forever developing and experimenting, the drama department is keen to support individuals with their theatrical endeavours, whatever they may be.
Progression opportunities	Studying Theatre Studies can lead to careers in performance, production, or teaching, while also providing a strong foundation for university studies in arts, English and the humanities. The course is beneficial for those interested in drama, but also for those who want to improve skills that are highly sought after in a wide range of professions.
Transferable skills	In 2025, employers are seeking core human-centric soft skills evidenced by communication, creativity and confidence. These skills are universally valuable across all industries and are considered essential for navigating a dynamic work environment. In creating theatre, you are developing your analytical and problem-solving skills, resilience, innovation, flexibility, leadership, social influence, audience engagement and curiosity – to name but a few.
Assessment	• Original Drama written and created by students 30% • Scripted Performance – interpretating text 30% • Written Examination – Exploration of two set texts and live performance 40%
Subject email and name	Ms Maria Pereira Head of Drama Mariapereira@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

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